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ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent to which gender issues are incorporated into teacher education programs. Two separate lines of research informed and supported the study. The first related to research on gender issues in the school curriculum and environment, in the disciplines of education and teacher education, and in educational reform movements. The second line of scholarship related to feminist theory and feminist analyses of schooling. Two survey instruments were given to administrators and faculty at 30 teacher preparation institutions across Michigan; one survey instrument was given to students participating in one preservice program. Descriptive statistics and measures of central tendency were computed, and qualitative data were analyzed using Glaser's constant comparative method. Findings indicate gender related instruction is lacking in teacher education programs. While faculty and students advocated instruction on gender issues, they were unaware and uninformed about how it related to the classes they taught. This study also found that the absence of such instruction was unrelated to factors such as program accreditation, age and sex of faculty, and presence of program policy--all of which were among obstacles suggested in earlier research. These findings point to the need for a renewed effort to improve gender related discussion and instruction within teacher education programs. Four appendices present: the program survey instrument, the faculty survey instrument, the student survey instrument, and components of literature study project. (Contains 44 references.) (Author/ND)

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AWARENESS OF GENDER WITHIN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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Abstract

This study examined the extent to which gender issues are incorporated into teacher education programs. Two separate lines of research informed and supported the study. The first related to research on gender issues in the school curriculum and environment; in the disciplines of education and teacher education; and in educational reform movements. The second line of scholarship related to feminist theory and feminist analyses of schooling. Two survey instruments were given to administrators and faculty at 30 teacher preparation institutions across Michigan. One survey instrument was given to students participating in one preservice program. Descriptive statistics and measures of central tendency were computed, and qualitative data were analyzed using Glaser's constant comparative method. Findings indicate gender related instruction is lacking in teacher education programs. While faculty and students advocated instruction on gender issues, they were unaware and uninformed about how it related to the classes they taught. This study also found that the absence of such instruction was unrelated to factors such as program accreditation, age and sex of faculty, and presence of program policy--all of which were among obstacles suggested in earlier research. These finding point to the need for a renewed effort to improve gender related discussion and instruction within teacher education programs.

AWARENESS OF GENDER WITHIN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Reviews of research conducted over the last 25 years have shown female students to be at an educational disadvantage in elementary and secondary schools (American Association of University Women [AAUW], 1992; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Although females enter school ahead of males on all standardized measures of achievement, twelve years later they leave high school with lower achievement scores, diminished self-esteem and self-confidence, and restricted career plans (Sadker, Sadker & Donald, 1989).

In the formal curriculum, disparities between male and female students are apparent in mathematics and science achievement (AAUW, 1992) and in textbook content whereby females continue to be under-represented and sex- role stereotyped (Purcell & Stewart, 1990; Rutherford & Ahlgren, 1989). Furthermore, some scholars contend that the traditional content and organization of the formal curriculum has evolved to better serve the developmental needs and societal expectations of males than of females (AAUW, 1992; Martin, 1982; Shakeshaft, 1986).

Studies suggest that males also benefit from the informal, "hidden" curriculum of schools. Teachers interact more frequently with males and at higher cognitive levels than they do with females; they encourage males to persist with difficult tasks but provide assistance to females or encourage them to give up; they praise males for creative thinking and intellectual achievement but tend to praise females for neatness and good behavior (Sadker, Sadker & Thomas, cited in AAUW, 1992; Brophy & Good, 1974; Sadker & Sadker, 1982; Sadker & Sadker, 1986). Student-student interactions also discount females and reinforce their invisibility. Not only do male students receive more verbal feedback and attention from their peers, but female students spend more time watching and listening in class while male students perform experiments and engage in classroom activities (Rennie & Parker, cited in AAUW, 1989; Lockheed & Harris, 1984).

Research also concludes that sexual harassment between students, both physical and verbal, has more devastating effects on academic performance, self-confidence and self-esteem of females than of males (AAUW, 1993b; Stein, Marshall & Tropp, 1993).

Numerous reform measures have been advocated to address inequity based on gender, especially in the areas of legislation and education reform. Although they have not always been vigorously implemented, measures such as Title IX, the Women's Educational Equity Act, the Vocational Education Act, and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act have done much to improve opportunities for female students (AAUW, 1993a; Stein, 1993; Stromquist, 1989). The response from mainstream education reform, on the other hand, has not been encouraging. Analyses of numerous national education reform reports between 1982 and 1991 show gender to be virtually absent as a topic in the national debate (AAUW, 1992; Sadker, Sadker & Steindam, 1989; Tetreault & Schmuck, 1985).

Including gender issues in teacher education programs has been foremost among remedies advocated by feminists and equity scholars. Recommendations for teacher education curricula have included the study of equity legislation, women in education, sex differences, female developmental psychology, gender bias in texts, equitable teaching skills, linguistic bias, and classroom interaction bias.

A cursory examination of teacher education curricula, however, showed a gap between reform recommendations and actual instruction in teacher education programs. Past research demonstrated that instruction in gender issues was limited or non-existent. Future teachers had little chance to learn and apply equitable teaching skills. Teacher educators lacked interest in offering courses on gender issues. Program administrators were indifferent to such instruction. Guidelines were not prevalent, and assessment evaluating the success of such instruction was rare (Howe, 1973; Lather, 1983, 1984; McCune & Matthews, 1975; Styer, 1982; Wilson, 1993).

Because previous studies assessing the extent of such instruction and faculty attitudes toward it were few in number and were in danger of becoming dated, this study

was undertaken asking faculty, administrators and students to report on gender-related instruction in their teacher education programs. Unlike some earlier studies, this study focused only on professional courses and only those within pre-service programs; however, it expanded upon earlier studies by surveying faculty, administrators and students, in accredited and non-accredited programs, in large institutions and small ones, on general gender equity instruction and also on instruction drawing from feminist theory.

PERSPECTIVES/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two separate lines of research and scholarship informed and supported the study. The first, described above, related to research on gender issues in the school curriculum and environment; in the disciplines of education and teacher education; and in educational reform movements. It also drew from scholarship and commentaries on gender issues in three other areas: teaching as a profession and the devaluation of "women's work" (Goodman, 1992; Laird, 1988; Lather, 1983; Maher & Rathbone, 1986; Strober & Tyack, 1980); traditional educational research theories which have overlooked models of female development (Campbell & Greenberg, 1993; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1982); and various androcentric orientations underlying the discipline of education, including hierarchy and competition, masculine language, abstractionism, and over reliance on technology and quantitative measurement (Ginsburg and Clift, 1990; Goodman, 1992; Lather, 1983).

The second line of scholarship related to feminist theory and feminist analyses of schooling, especially two central points of difference on gender issues in education: (a) equity approaches, which emphasize equal treatment of males and females in classrooms and curriculum, visible female role models, equal educational outcomes, and access for females to traditionally male spheres in society; and (b) transformative approaches, which emphasize the re-valuing of traditionally female qualities, movement away from male-defined norms, and developing in all students the best skills and attributes of each gender.

Especially useful in defining these approaches were phase theory analyses describing how scholarship on women enters the curriculum (Lerner, 1981; McIntosh, 1984, 1989; Schuster & Van Dyne, 1984; Tetreault, 1985, 1986).

This exploratory study focused upon discovering answers to the following questions.

1. What is the extent to which pre-service teacher education programs emphasize gender related instruction?
2. What are faculty and student attitudes toward gender related instruction?
3. Are pre-service teachers aware of gender related issues when planning lessons for PK-12 classrooms?

METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

Three survey instruments were used in this study, and participating students were required to complete a literature study project. Analyses of the surveys provided descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency and variance. Glaser's constant comparative method (1969) was used to conduct analyses of open-ended survey items and the literature study projects.

The Program Survey Instrument (Mader, 1994) (see Appendix A) was given to each of the 30 program administrators of Michigan's teacher education programs and had a 73% return rate. There were nine questions asking about the status of gender related instruction in their institution's pre-service program, past coverage of issues related to gender, anticipated changes, extent of faculty discussion, extent of administrative support, presence of student competency requirements, presence of explicit gender related instruction policies, and presence of gender related instruction in specific courses.

The Faculty Survey Instrument (Mader, 1994) (see Appendix B) was given to all 247 faculty members teaching courses within the pre-service professional sequence at these 30 institution and had a 53% return rate. The survey contained multi-part questions

on 50 items drawn from the two lines of research and scholarship mentioned above in the discussion of theoretical framework. Faculty were asked about the extent and level of actual gender equity instruction in their classes, the extent to which they advocated such instruction, their preferred curricular approaches, and perceived facilitators and barriers to such instruction.

The Student Survey Instrument (see Appendix C) was given to 70 students enrolled in a pre-service program at one university and had a 100% return rate. It contained 20 items asking them the extent to which they were aware of gender related patterns in schools and schooling and the extent to which the teacher education program at this single university explored the topic of gender.

The Literature Study Project (King, 1994) (see Appendix D) was completed by 70 pre-service teachers. It was used in this study as a means of determining the extent to which pre- service teachers were aware of and incorporated gender awareness when planning instruction. Titles of children's literature they selected and their rationales for selection, the ratio of female to male main characters in the selected literature, and the character attributes they chose to highlight or ignore when designing instruction were carefully analyzed.

Michigan programs were thought to be important to study since they prepare a large number of candidates for certification each year. Moreover, like most other states, Michigan does not require that gender related instruction be a component of teacher education curricula.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the Program Survey Instrument revealed that gender related instruction was not prominent in teacher education programs, regardless of program size, accreditation, or public/private status. Most institutions identified only "moderate" or "minimal" when asked about overall amount of formal instruction on gender issues (95%),

formal faculty discussion on the topic (100%), administrative support (80%), and presence of student competency requirements (86%). Although several programs surveyed offered a diversity course that included issues of gender (55%), most had no program policy or philosophy statement on gender related instruction (51%). Many programs, however, reported recent increases in gender related instruction (50%) or anticipated increases over the next two to three years (45%).

Analysis of the Student Survey Instrument revealed parallel findings about one teacher education program. While the majority of pre-service teachers (83%) had discussions of gender bias within their teacher preparation program, almost two-thirds claimed their education courses did not address gender related differences in learning styles. Moreover, 82% were not required to analyze school textbooks and materials for gender issues even though 75% of the pre-service teachers claimed to have some direct experience in creating gender-fair lesson plans. In general, gender does not appear to hold a prominent place in this particular teacher education program yet some pre-service teachers have had some exposure to gender issues during their teacher training.

Analysis of the Faculty Survey Instrument revealed that gender related instruction was advocated much more than it was actually included in courses, regardless of faculty members' sex, rank or age. Few faculty reported in-depth inclusion of specific components of gender related instruction (7%), and almost a third reported no inclusion (30%). Surprisingly, these same individuals advocated substantial inclusion of these components. Some 30% advocated in-depth inclusion, 68% advocated moderate inclusion, and only 2% advocated no inclusion of gender related instruction. When asked what factors would most facilitate inclusion of such instruction in their own classes, most faculty identified increased student interest in the topic (95%) and professional literature on the topic (92%). Factors considered somewhat or not at all facilitative were certification testing requirements on the topic (82%) and stronger accreditation guidelines on the topic (78%).

Analysis of the Student Survey Instrument revealed attitudinal differences between female and male pre-service teachers with regard to gender issues. For instance, most of the male pre-service teachers (93%) felt their education courses viewed topics explicitly from female perspectives, at least some of the time, while none of the female pre-service teachers felt this was true. In addition, 51% of the female pre-service teachers felt strongly that female role models should be included in classroom textbooks and materials while only 27% of the male pre-service teachers felt the same way.

A statistically significant ($p<.05$) disparity between female and male pre-service teachers was in their awareness of gender related patterns in teacher-student interactions. While 57% of males were aware of some gender related patterns in teacher-student interactions, a full 43% claimed they had never observed such patterns. However, most female pre-service teachers (91%) indicated awareness of gender related patterns in teacher-student interactions. It appears as though the female pre-service teachers in this sample, having most likely experienced the previously described "hidden" curriculum of schools, are more sensitive to issues of gender equity than male pre-service teachers.

Analyses of the Literature Study Projects and the Student Survey Instrument demonstrated that students, like faculty, advocated gender related instruction to a much greater degree than they actually included it in their own teaching. For example, 86% of students felt strongly that equal gender representation was an important criteria when selecting books for classroom use, yet the children's literature they selected to use in their classrooms contained a 2 to 1 ratio of male to female main characters.

Despite this ratio, some pre-service teachers of both genders did demonstrate awareness of gender issues. For instance, in *The Elves and the Shoemaker* project, which was prepared by three female pre-service teachers, discussion questions prompted readers to think about gendered stereotypes, how they influenced the lives of the characters, and how the story might have been altered. The discussion questions used with *Streams to the River, River to the Sea* were prepared by both male and female pre-service teachers and

addressed issues such as capture, bondage, escape attempts, and forced marriages. The questions indicated that not only were pre-service teachers aware of cultural practices that had a direct influence on women of the past, but they also demonstrated pre-service teachers' abilities to incorporate this awareness into their teaching.

Not all Literature Study Projects exhibited a high degree of gender awareness among pre-service teachers. In fact, of the 22 Literature Study Projects, only four (18%) included any instructional activities focusing on gender. Some projects missed the opportunity to focus on positive female characters who defied stereotyping. In the *Maniac Magee* project, no mention was given to Mrs. Beale, who despite public opinion, invited Maniac, a white boy, to live with her and her family on the black side of town. In the *Island of the Blue Dolphins* project, no mention was given to the uneasy feelings Karana had when survival forced her to "do a man's work" and make weapons to defend herself.

CONCLUSIONS

This study established that gender related instruction is lacking in teacher education programs. Despite the fact that teacher education faculty and students advocated instruction on gender issues, they were unaware and uninformed about how it was related to the classes they teach. This study also found that the absence of such instruction is unrelated to factors such as program accreditation, age and sex of faculty, and presence of program policy--all of which were among obstacles suggested in earlier research.

These findings, coupled with past studies revealing inequities, point to the general need for a renewed effort to improve gender-related instruction in teacher education programs. First, schools of education should be integrating instruction on gender within all teacher preparation courses. At the very minimum, at least one intensive course on gender and its applications to education should be required. Second, discussion of

classroom interaction bias and equitable teaching skills needs to occur. In addition, faculty need to be more introspective about their own modeling of equitable teaching. Third, pre-service teachers need to be encouraged to reflect on how they are applying principles of gender awareness in their own teaching. Finally, this study points not only to the need for individual effort, but to the establishment of coherent programs that address gender issues in teacher education.

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APPENDIX A: PROGRAM SURVEY INSTRUMENT (MADER, 1994)

GENDER EQUITY IN SCHOOLS: THE ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSE TO GENDER EQUITY INSTRUCTION

Directions: Please respond to the following as they pertain to your pre-service professional program:

1. At this time, the overall amount of gender equity instruction in our program would best be described as:
   _____Extensive _____Moderate _____Minimal _____Not Sure

2. Over the last 2-3 years, gender equity instruction in our program has:
   _____Increased _____Decreased _____Stayed the Same _____Not Sure

3. For the next 2-3 years, we have planned the following for gender equity instruction in our program:
   _____More Coverage _____Less Coverage _____No Change _____Not Sure

4. Formal faculty discussion on gender equity instruction in our program would best be described as:
   _____Extensive _____Moderate _____Minimal _____Not Sure

5. Expressed administrative support for gender equity instruction in our program would best be described as:
   _____Extensive _____Moderate _____Minimal _____Not Sure

6. Our requirements for demonstrated student competency in gender-fair instruction would best be described as:
   _____Extensive _____Moderate _____Minimal _____Not Sure

7. Our program's policy and/or philosophy statements specifically address gender equity instruction:
   _____Yes _____No _____Not Sure

8. Our program offers at least one course devoted wholly to gender equity issues:
   _____Yes _____No _____Not Sure (If Yes: _____Required? _____Elective?)

9. Our program offers at least one course devoted to equity issues, including gender
   _____Yes _____No _____Not Sure (If Yes: _____Required? _____Elective?)

APPENDIX B: FACULTY SURVEY INSTRUMENT (MADER, 1994)

GENDER EQUITY IN SCHOOLS: THE ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

I. EXAMPLES OF GENDER EQUITY TOPICS IN PRE-SERVICE PROGRAMS	DO YOU INCLUDE THIS TOPIC IN THE CLASSES YOU TEACH?			SHOULD IT APPEAR SOMEWHERE IN PRE-SERVICE CLASSES?		
	Not At All	Some-what	In Depth	Not At All	Some-what	In Depth
1. Direct discussion with students about various forms of gender bias	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Analysis of school textbooks and materials for gender equity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Title IX and other sex equity laws	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Gender patterns in subjects such as mathematics, science, technology	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Gender patterns in extra-curricular school activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Test bias as related to gender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Gender patterns among those referred for remedial help and special education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Sexual harassment/discounting of female students by classmates or teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Gender-related patterns in college, career and personal counseling	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Direct practice in gender-fair lesson plans, instruction, and learning styles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Gender-related differences in learning styles and preferred activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX B: FACULTY SURVEY INSTRUMENT (Continued)

I. EXAMPLES OF GENDER EQUITY TOPICS IN PRE-SERVICE PROGRAMS	DO YOU INCLUDE THIS TOPIC IN THE CLASSES YOU TEACH?			SHOULD IT APPEAR SOMEWHERE IN PRE-SERVICE CLASSES?		
	Not At All	Some-what	In Depth	Not At All	Some-what	In Depth
12. Single-gender vs. mixed-gender learning groups	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Amount and quality of teacher attention as related to student gender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Teacher grading standards as related to student gender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Teacher expectations of student behavior as related to student gender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Gender-related reward systems for assertiveness/passivity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Loss of personal "voice" in adolescent females	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Effects of gender-exclusive language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. Differential valuing of "male" and "female" attributes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Encouraging "female" attributes in male students, as well as vice versa	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Incorporating issues of gender, power and violence against females into the traditional school curriculum	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Gender-specific concepts of "success" and "achievement" in education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. Inter-connections between gender, race and class inequity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX B: FACULTY SURVEY INSTRUMENT (Continued)

I. EXAMPLES OF GENDER EQUITY TOPICS IN PRE-SERVICE PROGRAMS	DO YOU INCLUDE THIS TOPIC IN THE CLASSES YOU TEACH?			SHOULD IT APPEAR SOMEWHERE IN PRE-SERVICE CLASSES?		
	Not At All	Some-what	In Depth	Not At All	Some-what	In Depth
24. Viewing education topics from explicitly female perspectives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Gender-related staffing patterns in schools and in teacher education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Women's role in education; implications of teaching as a female profession	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. Whether bias against females can be present in a largely female profession	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28. Competition-nurturance conflict within education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. Education's traditional reliance on male developmental models; inclusion of female developmental models	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. The absence of gender equity as a topic in most educational reform literature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

II. CURRICULAR APPROACHES: WHICH STATEMENT BEST REFLECTS YOUR OPINION ABOUT PRE-SERVICE INSTRUCTION?	I MOST AGREE WITH: (CHECK ONLY ONE)
1. Gender equity instruction should be provided in a <u>separate course</u>.	☐
2. Gender equity instruction should be provided <u>throughout the program</u>.	☐
3. Gender equity instruction should be provided using <u>both approaches</u>: throughout the program and in a separate course.	☐
4. Gender equity instruction <u>should not be provided</u> in pre-service programs.	☐

APPENDIX B: FACULTY SURVEY INSTRUMENT (Continued)

III. FACILITATORS: TO WHAT EXTENT DO (OR, WOULD) THE FOLLOWING INCREASE YOUR COVERAGE OF GENDER EQUITY ISSUES IN YOUR CLASSES?	**Not At All**	**Some-what**	**In Depth**
1. Teacher education texts and materials which address gender equity issues	☐	☐	☐
2. Professional literature, articles, journals which address gender equity issues	☐	☐	☐
3. General news and media coverage which address gender equity issues	☐	☐	☐
4. In-service faculty seminars on gender equity issues	☐	☐	☐
5. Teacher certification testing on gender equity issues	☐	☐	☐
6. Stronger accreditation standards on gender equity instruction	☐	☐	☐
7. Formal program policies on gender equity instruction	☐	☐	☐
8. Support from faculty colleagues for gender equity instruction	☐	☐	☐
9. Support from program administrators for gender equity instruction	☐	☐	☐
10. Student interest in gender equity instruction	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX C: STUDENT SURVEY

As part of a university study, your help is needed in obtaining information on gender attitudes and exposure to gender issues. The few minutes that it will take to complete the survey is greatly appreciated. Please place a check mark under one of the responses for each question below. Please feel free to comment or elaborate on any of the questions.

	Not at All	Some	In-depth
1. To what extent do you notice gender related patterns in subjects such as math, science and technology?	☐	☐	☐
2. To what extent should issues of gender, power and violence against females be incorporated into traditional school curriculum?	☐	☐	☐
3. To what extent should educational materials include female role models?	☐	☐	☐
4. To what extent should educational materials include male role models?	☐	☐	☐
5. To what extent should equal gender representation be used in children's literature and children's textbooks?	☐	☐	☐
6. To what extent have you noticed gender bias in tests you have taken?	☐	☐	☐
7. To what extent have you noticed gender related patterns in teacher-student interactions?	☐	☐	☐
8. To what extent have you noticed sexual harassment or discounting of female students by their classmates?	☐	☐	☐
9. To what extent have you noticed sexual harassment or discounting of male students by their classmates?	☐	☐	☐
10. In your own experience, have you noticed gender-related patterns in guidance or career counseling?	☐	☐	☐
11. To what extent can bias against females be present in a largely female profession?	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX C: STUDENT SURVEY INSTRUMENT (Continued)

	Not at All	Some	In-depth
12. To what extent have your education courses discussed the subject of gender bias?	☐	☐	☐
13. To what extent have your education courses addressed the connections among gender, race and socioeconomic class?	☐	☐	☐
14. To what extent have your education courses viewed topics from explicitly female perspectives?	☐	☐	☐
15. In your education courses, to what extent have you been required to analyze school textbooks and materials for gender equity?	☐	☐	☐
16. How much direct practice have you had in creating gender-fair lesson plans or instruction?	☐	☐	☐
17. To what extent have your education courses focused on gender related differences in learning styles and preferred classroom activities?	☐	☐	☐
18. How much have your education courses focused on amount and quality of teacher attention to students as it relates to student gender?	☐	☐	☐
19. What is the extent of exposure you have had on the topic of women's roles in education?	☐	☐	☐
20. To what extent have you been made aware of gender related staffing patterns in schools and in teacher education?	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX D: COMPONENTS OF LITERATURE STUDY PROJECT

The Literature Study Project guidelines were developed by King (1994) and contained two components. The first component required class members to meet in literature discussion groups. The second component required participants to select a particular piece of literature and collaboratively develop a folder of literature-related activities to be used in their field-based classrooms. Folders contained the following items.

* an originally written synopsis of the story
* information about the author and/or illustrator
* suggested grade levels and any special teaching suggestions
* a story map
  (including setting, characters, conflict, plot development, theme)
* an activity designed to teach a particular literary element
  (i.e. characterization, mood, symbolism, metaphor, and point of view)
* a list of discussion questions that highlight significant literary elements
* a list of vocabulary words to be taught
* an activity designed to teach a reading comprehension strategy
* two thinking skills for each level of Bloom's taxonomy (1956)
* an explanation of what, why, and how activities will be evaluated
* a list of final celebration project ideas to enrich or extend appreciation and involvement with literature